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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION

AT RICHMOND, DECEMBER 13, 2000

PETITION OF

PRINCE GEORGE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

CASE NO. PUE000734

For a general rate proceeding  
pursuant to the Virginia  
Electric Utility  
Restructuring Act

ORDER ON PETITION

On October 26, 2000, Prince George Electric Cooperative ("PGEC" or "Coop") notified the Commission of its intention to file a general rate application on or before December 31, 2000, pursuant to the provisions of § 56-582 A 3 of the Code of Virginia. That provision, a part of the Virginia Electric Utility Restructuring Act ("Act"), provides that incumbent electric utilities may, prior to January 1, 2001, file a rate increase application and that the "rates proposed therein shall go into effect on January 1, 2001." Such rates are interim; any amounts "found excessive by the Commission shall be subject to refund with interest, as may be ordered by the Commission."

On December 11, 2000, PGEC filed a petition requesting a waiver from compliance with the requirement, established in 20 VAC 5-200-21 B 6, which requires that notice of intent to file a general rate application be provided to all parties of

record appearing in the cooperative's last rate case and from compliance with 20 VAC 5-200-21 C 12 e and f, which require 60 days' advance notice to the public.

The Coop explains that, although it filed a notice letter with the Commission on October 6, 2000, its Board of Directors did not make the final decision to go forward with the application until November 27, 2000, less than 60 days before the last day provided by the Act for the filing of the application. Therefore, compliance with the provisions of the rules was not possible. PGEC advises that it is prepared to provide public notice of its application on or before December 19, 2000, by newspaper publication in its service territory and by inserts to its customers bills on or before December 31, 2000.

The Coop asserts that no party will be prejudiced by the relief requested, "since each customer or party will have ample opportunity to comment on Prince George's application for general rate relief before any rate increase subsequently granted by the Commission will go into effect on a permanent basis" pursuant to the Act.

NOW THE COMMISSION, having considered the petition, as well as the applicable statutes and rules, is of the opinion and finds that it should grant the requested waiver. We find, and

direct, PGEC to provide public notice of its application forthwith.

The Act permits the filing of the rate application and our rules are not intended to prevent the Coop from seeking this statutorily provided relief. We do not condone the Coop's inattention to our regulations regarding notice to its customers, but believe the error is in this instance to be essentially harmless.

Accordingly, IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

(1) This matter is docketed and assigned Case No. PUE000734.

(2) The relief requested in PGEC's petition is GRANTED.

(3) PGEC shall forthwith undertake the customer notification measures proposed in its petition.

(4) This matter is continued for further orders of the Commission.